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ABSTRACT

This report presents follow-up statistics on 2000-2001 graduates of Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC). Graduates were surveyed during the winter of 2002 to determine how satisfied they were with the PVCC experience, what jobs they had obtained, which schools they were attending, how much they earned, and what impact PVCC had upon their careers and education. A total of 120 completed surveys were collected (44% response rate). Major findings include: (1) 97% were satisfied with the quality of services provided by PVCC; (2) 95% indicated that they were satisfied with the overall quality of their academic program at PVCC, particularly the course materials, grading, instruction, and course availability; (3) more than 75% believed that their PVCC education had contributed to their ability to reason logically, solve problems, research a topic, write clearly, and use computers and math; (4) academically, graduates performed well at transfer institutions, maintaining a mean grade point average of 3.22; (5) 82% indicated that the credits they earned at PVCC transferred as expected; (6) only 3 employed respondents indicated that they received assistance from PVCC in securing employment; (7) 74% were employed at the time of the survey; and (8) 95% felt that they were either better prepared, or about as well prepared, as others beginning careers in their job fields because of PVCC. Appended are the survey instrument and summary of student comments. (EMH)

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ED 466 879

Follow-Up Survey of PVCC Graduates Of the Class of 2000-01

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Research Report No. 3-2002

June 2002

Piedmont Virginia Community College
Charlottesville, Virginia

Jennifer A. Shields
Institutional Research Associate

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Follow-Up Survey of PVCC Graduates Of the Class of 2000-01

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Jennifer A. Shields
Institutional Research Associate
Piedmont Virginia Community College

Office of Institutional Research
Piedmont Virginia Community College
501 College Drive
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-7589

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Introduction

Since 1974, Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) has conducted annual surveys of its graduates. Questions are asked concerning jobs, career satisfaction, salaries, study at other colleges and universities, and the impact PVCC has had upon the careers and further education of its graduates. Information from the surveys is used to improve academic programs and college services.

This study reports the results of the 27th graduate survey, conducted for graduates of the class of 2000-01. The class of 2000-01 includes those students graduating from PVCC during Summer Term 2000, Fall Semester 2000, and Spring Semester 2001. The survey instrument was the same used for previous classes and is included in this study as Appendix A. At the end of the survey, graduates were invited to offer comments or suggestions concerning any aspect of their PVCC experience. Graduates were particularly asked to comment on the ways that the college could improve its curriculum and services. These comments are contained in Appendix B.

Methodology

During the winter of 2002, the Office of Institutional Research mailed surveys and cover letters to 274 graduates of the class of 2000-01. Surveys were mailed approximately eight months after graduation to allow time for graduates to secure a job or to enroll in a college or university. Those not responding to the initial mailing of the follow-up survey were contacted two additional times.

Of the 274 graduates, 120 returned completed surveys for a response rate of 43.8%. This figure is consistent with the response rate from the previous years (1995-96,

41.0%; 1996-97, 31.2%; 1997-98, 45.2%; 1998-99, 56.7%; 2000-01, 48.0%).

Demographic Characteristics

An important aspect of graduate surveys is to identify demographic characteristics of survey respondents. The primary use of such data is to determine whether the respondents are representative of the overall graduate population. If they are representative, the results from the respondents can be generalized to the whole graduate population. Toward that end, several categories of demographic information are presented, including sex, race, and age of survey respondents.

In terms of sex, survey respondents were representative of the graduating class of 2000-01. As can be seen in Table 1, over 60% of survey respondents were female.

Table 1: Sex of Survey Respondents

Sex	Respondents	Percent	Graduates	Percent
Male	44	36.7%	116	39.9%
Female	76	63.3%	175	60.1%

This percentage is similar to the percentages of females in the total graduate population, where 60.1% of the graduates were female.

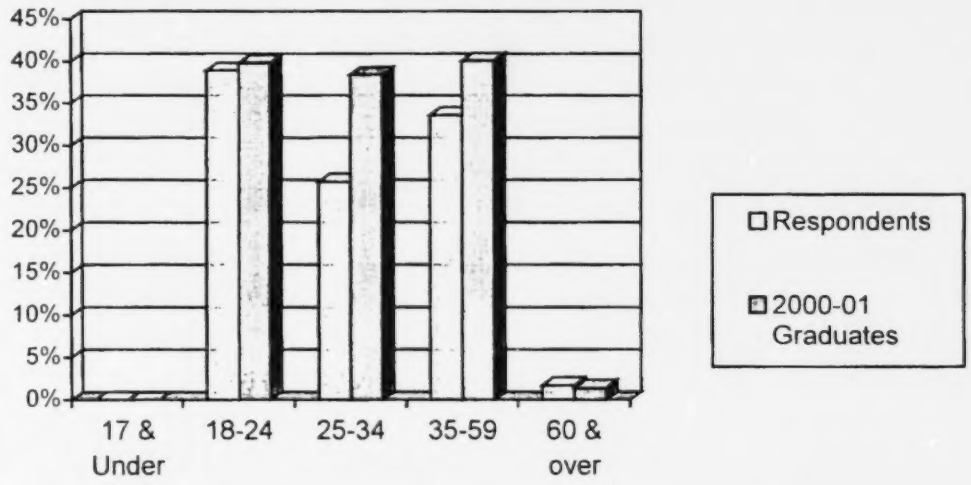
Table 2 compares the race of survey respondents to that of students in the overall graduate population. The percentage of White survey respondents (81.7%) was similar to the percentage of White students in the overall graduate population (79.4%). The percentage of African American respondents (10.0%) also was consistent with the percentage of African American students in the overall graduate population (11.7%). This consistency was also true with the American Indian respondents (0.8%),

Table 2: Race of Survey Respondents

Race	Respondents	Percent	Graduates	Percent
White	98	81.7%	231	79.4%
African American	12	10.0%	34	11.7%
Am. Indian	1	0.8%	3	1.0%
Asian	7	6.7%	16	5.5%
Hispanic	1	0.8%	6	2.1%
Other	0	0.0%	1	0.3%

Asian American respondents (6.7%), and other-race respondents (0.0%). Although the percentage of Hispanic respondents (0.8%) was considerably lower than the percentage of Hispanics in the student body as a whole (2.8%), no real inferences should be made due to small numbers of Hispanic students at PVCC.

Figure 1: Age of Survey Respondents and 2000-01 Graduates



In terms of age, survey respondents tended to be similar to the 2000-01 graduates. As can be seen in Figure 1, the age distribution of the respondents was consistent with that of the graduating class. These similarities in demographic factors lead to the conclusion that in terms of age, race and sex, the respondent sample was representative of the overall graduate population.

Graduate Satisfaction

One of the primary aims of graduate surveys is to determine whether former students were satisfied with their PVCC experience. Toward that end, the questions contained in Section One of the survey were designed to address four main aspects of the

collegiate experiences of PVCC graduates: college services provided by PVCC, academic programs, PVCC's contribution to skill development, and financing a PVCC education.

College Services

Graduates were asked to rate their satisfaction level with nine aspects of college services provided by PVCC. The responses to this question are shown in Table 3. A majority of 2000-01 graduates reported being satisfied with the college services provided by PVCC.

Every category but four received higher than 90% satisfaction rating from respondents: Computing Lab (97.3%), Registration Services (93.2%), Library Services (93.1%), and the Learning Center (91.8%). The four categories receiving less than a 90% satisfaction rating were Personal Counseling (83.2%), Student Activities (74.6%), Financial Aid (73%), and Career Services (71.9%). When asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the college services provided by PVCC, over 97% of 2000-01 survey respondents indicated satisfaction.

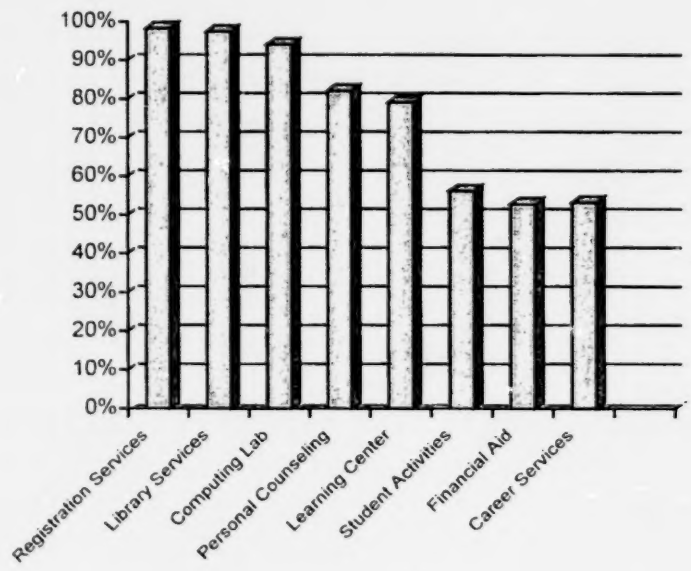
Table 3: Graduate Satisfaction with College Services

Service	Satisfied	Unsatisfied
Career Services	71.9%	28.1%
Computing Lab	97.3%	2.7%
Financial Aid	73.0%	27.0%
Learning Center	91.8%	8.2%
Library Services	93.1%	6.9%
Personal Counseling	83.2%	16.8%
Registration Services	93.2%	6.8%
Student Activities	74.6%	25.4%
College Services Overall	97.3%	2.7%

In addition to assessing satisfaction with college services, the data obtained in the college services portion of the survey can be used to determine the level of service usage. This is accomplished by reviewing the number of "Not Applicable" survey responses. Figure 2 shows the percent of respondents who rated each category, or the percent that utilized each service. Based on the number of respondents who rated each service, it can be seen that at least 80% of respondents used Registration Services, Library

Services, the Computing Lab, Personal Counseling, and the Learning Center. Fewer students used Career Services, Financial Aid, or Student Activities, (though the percent of utilization was still higher than 50% in each category).

Figure 2: Percent of Student Utilization



Academic Programs

In addition to college services, the survey was designed to determine whether graduates were satisfied with various aspects of their academic programs. Students were asked to rate their satisfaction level in seven areas of PVCC's academic program. Table 4 shows the responses to these questions.

In every aspect but two, more than 90% of respondents said they were satisfied with their academic program. Students were especially satisfied with the course materials (97.5%), grading (96.7%), faculty (95.8%), instruction (95.8%), and course availability (91.7%).

Overall, graduates reported high levels of satisfaction with the quality of their academic programs at PVCC. When asked to rate their satisfaction with the quality of their academic program overall, over 95% of respondents were satisfied. Only 5% of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with their program at PVCC.

Table 4: Graduate Satisfaction with Academic Programs

Aspect	Satisfied	Unsatisfied
Academic Advising	82.5%	17.5%
Course Availability	91.7%	8.3%
Course Materials	97.5%	2.5%
Faculty	95.8%	4.2%
Grading	96.7%	3.3%
Instruction	95.8%	4.2%
Relationship with Faculty outside of Class	87.9%	12.1%
Academic Program Overall	95.0%	5.0%

Skill Development

Graduates were also asked to rate the extent that their PVCC education developed particular skills. Responses to this question are shown in Table 5. The majority of respondents were pleased with the skills they developed while attending PVCC. As can be seen in Table 5, more than eight out of ten respondents indicated that the college had contributed to their ability to reason logically (88.1%), solve problems (87.3%), research a topic (84.6%), write clearly and effectively (82.2%), and understand and use computers (81.4%). Finally, approximately 80% felt that attending PVCC had contributed to their ability to understand and use math (80.3%) and speak clearly and effectively (78.8%).

Table 5: Development of Skills while at PVCC

Skill	Contributed	Did not Contribute
Reason Logically	88.1%	11.9%
Research a Topic	84.6%	15.4%
Solve Problems	87.3%	12.7%
Speak Clearly and Effectively	78.8%	21.2%
Understand and Use Computers	81.4%	18.6%
Understand and Use Math	80.3%	19.7%
Write Clearly and Effectively	82.2%	17.8%

In addition to developing skills, many graduates believed that their PVCC experience helped prepare them to become responsible citizens. Seven out of ten of

survey respondents indicated that their PVCC education had prepared them for responsible citizenship.

Financing a PVCC Education

Another aim of the graduate survey is to learn how PVCC students financed their education. Over 80% of respondents were employed while attending PVCC (84.7%). Many who worked while attending PVCC were employed in full-time jobs. In fact, almost half of all employed respondents (48.5%) indicated that they worked more than 30 hours per week.

Relatively few graduates borrowed money to finance their PVCC education. Fewer than two out of ten survey respondents (16.2%) indicated that they borrowed money to pay for tuition, books, and other educational expenses while attending PVCC. Of the students who did borrow money, 70% borrowed less than $2,000.

Further Education

An important aspect of graduate surveys is to determine how well former PVCC students perform at the institutions to which they transfer. More than 40% (44.1%) of the 2000-01 survey respondents chose to continue their education at transfer institutions. Seven out of ten of those continuing their education were attending college full-time (70.9%). Of those who were not enrolled, almost half (49.3%) indicated that they had plans to enroll during the coming year.

Most of the 2000-01 graduates chose to continue their education at public, four-year colleges located within the Commonwealth of Virginia. In fact, 70% of all enrolled respondents chose to continue their education at the University of Virginia (31.8%), James Madison University (13.6%), Virginia Commonwealth University (11.4%), Virginia Polytechnic Institute (9.1%), Longwood College (6.8%), or Mary Baldwin

College (4.6%).

One of the principal aims of graduate surveys is to determine the educational goals of PVCC transfer students. Of the students continuing their education, 80% indicated that their purpose in attending college is to obtain a bachelor's degree. Among respondents not seeking a bachelor's degree, personal interest, professional development, and fulfilling a work requirement were listed as the primary purposes for attending college.

Graduates of the Class of 2000-01 chose to pursue a wide range of fields of study at the four-year institutions to which they transferred. The most popular majors were Business (12.0%) and Education (9.5%). Other majors included Computer Engineering, English, Finance, Government, Nursing, and Sociology.

Academically, 2000-01 graduates performed quite well at the institutions to which they transferred. The lowest grade point average (GPA) reported was 1.6 and the highest 4.0. The average GPA earned by 2000-01 graduates at transfer institutions was 3.22.

For the most part, 2000-01 graduates were pleased with the level of academic preparation they received at PVCC. Over 95% of respondents (97.9%) indicated that their degree program at PVCC prepared them either very much or somewhat for their bachelor's program. Over 40% of respondents (43.1%) felt that they were better prepared academically than students who enrolled at their new schools as freshmen. Almost half of respondents (45.5%) felt that they were equal to their peers in terms of preparation. Only five respondents (11.4%) felt that they were not as well prepared. Finally, more than eight out of ten respondents (81.6%) rated the level of academic preparation they received at PVCC as either excellent or good. No students felt that the level of academic preparation received at PVCC was poor.

In addition to questions concerning academic preparation, graduates were asked

to compare the academic environment they experienced at PVCC with the learning environment at their transfer institution. Specifically, former students were asked to rate the level of student competitiveness, faculty friendliness, individual attention shown to students, quality of instruction, and strictness of grading practices at PVCC relative to those same aspects at the colleges and universities to which they transferred. The results to these questions are shown in Table 6.

Overall, PVCC compared very favorably with transfer schools. As can be seen in Table 6, more than eight out of ten survey respondents indicated that the faculty friendliness (93.2%), the degree of individual attention shown to students (93.0%), and the quality of instruction (88.4%) received at PVCC equaled or exceeded those attributes at the four-year institutions to which they transferred. More than six out of ten respondents believed that the strictness of grading practices (63.6%) at PVCC equaled or exceeded those of their four-year institutions. Survey respondents were less enthusiastic about the degree of student competitiveness. Less than half of respondents (45.5%) felt that the degree of student competitiveness at PVCC was comparable to their transfer institutions.

Table 6: Comparison of PVCC and Transfer Institutions

	PVCC has More	About the Same	PVCC has Less
Degree of Student Competitiveness	0.0%	45.5%	54.5%
Friendliness of Faculty and Staff	45.5%	47.7%	6.8%
Individual Attention Shown to Students	65.1%	27.9%	7.0%
Quality of Instruction	14.0%	74.4%	11.6%
Strictness of Grading Practices	6.8%	56.8%	36.4%

In addition to assessing academic preparation, graduate surveys seek to gauge graduate satisfaction with the transfer process. For the most part, 2000-01 graduates were pleased with the transfer process. Over eight out of ten enrolled respondents (82.2%) indicated that the credits they earned at PVCC transferred as expected, and 85%

indicated that the college to which they transferred was their first choice. Finally, all enrolled respondents (100%) who transferred to public four-year colleges in Virginia were satisfied with the transfer process.

Many 2000-01 graduates took advantage of the transfer services offered by PVCC. Over 60% of all enrolled respondents (61.9%) received assistance from PVCC in transferring to their current college. Students rated the quality of this assistance; the results are shown in Table 7. Most of those who received assistance were pleased with the quality of that support. More than six out of ten respondents rated the quality of assistance they received from academic advisors (72.0%), academic programs (64.0%) and faculty (76.0%) as excellent or good. Still, a large percentage felt the quality of assistance was either fair or poor, a finding that indicates some improvements might be made.

Table 7: Quality of Assistance in Transfer Process

	Excellent or Good	Fair or Poor
Quality of Assistance from Academic Advising	72.0%	28.0%
Quality of Assistance from Academic Programs	64.0%	36.0%
Quality of Assistance from Faculty	76.0%	24.0%

Employment

An important indicator of how well PVCC prepares its students is how graduates perform in the workplace. Many 2000-01 graduates obtained gainful employment upon leaving PVCC. As can be seen in Table 8 about three-quarters of survey respondents (74.2%) were employed at the time of the survey. Over 70% worked full-time (71.9%). Of those who were unemployed at the time of the survey, almost two-thirds (63.3%) were not seeking employment.

PVCC graduates of the Class of 2000-01 are employed in a wide range of occupations. Graduates were asked to select one of nine occupational groups (using a Virginia Employment Commission classification scheme) that best described the work they do. The results of this are shown in Table 9. For the most part, graduates were employed in occupations that were related to their fields of study at PVCC. Approximately 70% of employed respondents reported that their PVCC education was related to their current occupation.

Table 8: Employment Status

Employed Full-Time in a Related Field	40.5%
Employed Full-Time in an Unrelated Field	11.7%
Employed Part-Time in a Related Field	14.4%
Employed Part-Time in an Unrelated Field	7.2%
Unemployed and Seeking Employment	9.9%
Unemployed and Not Seeking Employment	16.2%

Table 9: Occupational Group

Group	No.	Pct.
Administrative Support	13	16.0%
Agriculture	0	0.0%
Executive / Manager	3	3.7%
Marketing / Sales	5	6.2%
Operators / Laborers	1	1.2%
Professional Specialty Workers	36	44.4%
Service Workers	14	17.3%
Technicians	9	11.1%

One way of assessing the impact of a PVCC education is to ask graduates whether their PVCC education provided them with the tools they need to be effective in the workplace. Almost eight out of ten survey respondents (79.5%) felt that the skills acquired in their PVCC degree programs enhanced either very much or somewhat their workplace performance.

Another way of gauging the impact of a PVCC education with respect to career preparation is to determine whether PVCC graduates are better prepared academically than other employees in the same career field. An overwhelming majority of survey respondents (94.8%) felt that they were either better prepared, or about as well prepared, as other employees beginning careers in their job field. Only four respondents (5.2%) felt that they were not as well prepared as other employees in the same career field.

Finally, graduates were asked to rate the quality of academic preparation they received at PVCC. For the most part, graduates were pleased with their level of academic preparation provided by PVCC. Almost 90% of respondents rated their academic preparation as either excellent or good (89.9%).

Job satisfaction among 2000-01 graduates was quite high. Of the 81 graduates who responded to this question, 90.2% responded that they were satisfied with their current job. In addition, over 60% of the respondents indicated that they intend to pursue their job as a long-term career (62.5%).

Attending PVCC had a positive impact on the job prospects of many 2000-01 graduates. Almost half of all employed survey respondents (45.1%) obtained their current jobs either while attending, or after attending, PVCC. Fifty-four percent of all employed respondents felt that their degree helped them to obtain their present job, and 13.2% felt that their PVCC degree helped them obtain a promotion in their current job.

As previously discussed, many 2000-01 graduates relied on assistance from faculty, advisors, or academic program staff in transferring to a four-year institution. A similar reliance was not evident with respect to career placement services. In fact, survey results indicate that relatively few 2000-01 graduates received assistance from PVCC in obtaining jobs. Only three employed respondent (2.5%) indicated that they received assistance from PVCC in securing employment.

Many 2000-01 graduates believed that attending PVCC had a positive impact on earnings. Graduate salaries ranged from $800 to $65,000 with the average annual salary earned by employed survey respondents being $28,037.90. On average, graduates estimated that their salaries would have been about $1,000 lower if they had not attended PVCC.

Conclusions

Major findings of this study included:

- Graduates were very satisfied with the overall quality of college services. An overwhelming majority of survey respondents (97.3%) were satisfied with the quality of services provided by PVCC. These services included Registration Services, Library Services, Computing Lab, and the Learning Center, all of which were rated as satisfying by over 90% of respondents.

- An overwhelming majority of respondents (95.0%) also indicated that they were satisfied with the overall quality of their academic program at PVCC. Respondents were particularly satisfied with course materials (97.5%), grading (96.7%), instruction (95.8%), and course availability (91.7%).

- Graduates were pleased with the skills they developed while attending PVCC. Over 75% believed that their PVCC education had contributed to their ability to reason logically (88.1%), solve problems (87.3%), research a topic (84.6%), write clearly and effectively (82.2%), understand and use computers (81.4%), understand and use math (80.3%) and speak clearly and effectively (78.8%).

- Forty-four percent of respondents were enrolled in a postsecondary institution at the time of the survey. Most students attending postsecondary institutions chose to continue their education at the the University of Virginia (31.8%), James Madison University (13.6%), Virginia Commonwealth University (11.4%), or Virginia Polytechnic Institute (9.1%).

- Academically, 2000-01 graduates performed quite well at the postsecondary institutions to which they transferred. Enrolled respondents reported a mean grade point average (GPA) of 3.22 at their respective colleges.

- For the most part, graduates who transferred were pleased with the level of academic preparation they received at PVCC. Over 95% of respondents (97.9%) indicated that their degree program at PVCC prepared them either very much or somewhat for their bachelor's program. About forty percent of respondents (43.1%) believed that they were either better prepared, or about as well prepared, as students who enrolled at transfer institutions as freshmen.

- Graduates were also satisfied with the transfer process. Eight out of ten enrolled respondents (82.2%) indicated that the credits they earned at PVCC transferred as expected. Most respondents (85%) indicated that the institution to which they transferred was their first choice. All graduates who transferred to public four-year colleges in Virginia were satisfied with the transfer process.

- For the most part, graduates were pleased with the quality of transfer assistance received at PVCC. More than half of all enrolled respondents (61.9%) received assistance from PVCC in transferring to their current college. Of those who received assistance, more than six out of ten rated the quality of assistance they received from academic advisors (72.0%), their academic programs (64.0%), and faculty (76.0%) as either excellent or good.

- Few 2000-01 graduates received assistance from PVCC in obtaining jobs. Only three employed respondents (3.8%) indicated that they received assistance from PVCC in securing employment.

- Approximately three-quarters of the survey respondents (74.2%) were employed at the time of the survey. Over 70% worked full time (71.9%), and approximately 70% indicated that their current jobs were related to their fields of study at PVCC.

- Graduates were employed in a wide range of occupations. The most frequently cited positions were Professional Specialty Workers (44.4%), Service Workers (17.3%), and Administrative Support Positions (16.0%). Nine out of ten survey respondents (90.2%) were either very satisfied or satisfied with their current jobs; over half (62.5%) planned to pursue their current jobs as long-range careers.

- For the most part, 2000-01 graduates felt that PVCC provided them with the tools necessary to be effective in the workplace. Almost all respondents (94.8%) felt that they were either better prepared, or about as well prepared, as others beginning careers in their job fields. Nine out of ten respondents (89.9%) indicated that the academic preparation they received at PVCC was either excellent or good.

- Wage earnings were a primary source of financial support for 2000-01 graduates. Over eight out of ten respondents (84.7%) were employed while attending PVCC. Fewer than two out of ten respondents (16.2%) borrowed money to finance their PVCC education. Almost half of all employed respondents (48.5%) indicated they worked more than 30 hours per week.

- Attending PVCC had a positive impact on the job prospects and earnings of many 2000-01 graduates. Over half of the respondents (54.0%) felt that their degree from PVCC helped them to obtain their current job, and 13.2% believed that their degree helped them to obtain a promotion in their current job. The average annual salary

earned by employed respondents was $28,037. On average, respondents estimated that their salaries would have been $1,000 lower if they had not attended PVCC.

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Piedmont Virginia Community College
Follow-up Survey of Graduates for the Class of 2000-01

Instructions: Please check the appropriate box(es) for each question and answer all questions that apply to you. This information will be treated as strictly confidential with answers being combined for group analysis.

Graduate: *[Graduate Name]* Student ID: *[Graduate SSN]*

Section I: PVCC Experience

1. To what extent were you satisfied with each of the following college services provided by PVCC?

	Very much	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all	Not applicable
Career services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Computing Lab	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Financial aid	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Learning Center	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Library services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal counseling	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Registration services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. Overall, how satisfied were you with the quality of college services provided by PVCC?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

3. To what extent were you satisfied with each of the following aspects of your academic program?

	Very much	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all
Academic advising	☐	☐	☐	☐
Course availability	☐	☐	☐	☐
Course materials	☐	☐	☐	☐
Faculty	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grading	☐	☐	☐	☐
Instruction	☐	☐	☐	☐
Learning environment	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. To what extent were you satisfied with your relationship with faculty outside of class?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

5. Overall, how satisfied were you with the quality of your academic program at PVCC?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

6. To what extent did your PVCC education contribute to your ability to:

	Very much	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all
Reason logically	☐	☐	☐	☐
Research a topic	☐	☐	☐	☐
Solve problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Speak clearly & effectively	☐	☐	☐	☐
Understand & use computers	☐	☐	☐	☐
Understand & use math	☐	☐	☐	☐
Write clearly & effectively	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. To what extent did your PVCC education prepare you for responsible citizenship (e.g., make you better informed about your community and the political process)?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

(Continued on back)

8. Were you employed while attending PVCC? ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. If yes, how many hours per week on average did you work?
☐ 1 to 10 hours ☐ 31 to 40 hours
☐ 11 to 20 hours ☐ 41 to 50 hours
☐ 21 to 30 hours ☐ Over 50 hours

10. Did you borrow money to pay for tuition, books, and other educational expenses while attending PVCC?
☐ Yes ☐ No

11. If yes, how much did you borrow?
☐ $ 1 - $1,000 ☐ $3,001 - $4,000
☐ $1,001 - $2,000 ☐ $4,001 - $5,000
☐ $2,001 - $3,000 ☐ Over $5,000

Section II: Further Education

1. Are you currently enrolled in college? ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. If not, do you have plans to enroll during the coming year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(If not currently enrolled in college, skip to Section III: Employment)

3. Are you attending college full-time or part-time? ☐ Full-time ☐ Part-time

4. What type of college are you attending? ***(Please check one from each column)***
☐ 2-year ☐ Public ☐ In-state
☐ 4-year ☐ Private ☐ Out-of-state
☐ Other _____
(Please list)

5. What college are you attending? _____

6. Are you currently pursuing a bachelor's degree? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. If not, what is your primary purpose for attending college? ☐ Personal interest
☐ Professional development
☐ Pursue a graduate degree
☐ Satisfy a work requirement
☐ Other _____
(Please list)

(If not currently pursuing a bachelor's degree, skip to Section III: Employment)

8. What is your major field of study? _____

9. How many credit hours have you earned at your new college? _____

10. What is your current grade point average (on a 4.0 scale)? _____

11. To what extent is your bachelor's degree related to your PVCC degree program?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

12. To what extent did your PVCC degree program prepare you academically for the bachelor's program?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

13. Compared to students who started at your new school as freshmen, do you feel:
☐ Better prepared ☐ About as well prepared ☐ Less well prepared

14. In relation to your current studies, how would you rate the level of academic preparation you received at PVCC?
☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

15. For each of the following aspects of college environment, please indicate whether PVCC has more, less, or about the same of a given aspect as your current college.

	PVCC has more	About the same	PVCC has less
Degree of student competitiveness	☐	☐	☐
Friendliness of faculty and staff	☐	☐	☐
Individual attention shown to students	☐	☐	☐
Quality of instruction	☐	☐	☐
Strictness of grading practices	☐	☐	☐

16. Did the credits you earned at PVCC transfer as you expected they would? ☐ Yes ☐ No

17. How many credits, if any, were not accepted by your current college? _____

18. Which courses were not accepted? _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

19. Was the college to which you transferred your: ☐ First choice ☐ Third choice
☐ Second choice ☐ None of the above

20. If you transferred to a public 4-year college in Virginia, how satisfied were you with the transfer process?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

21. Did you receive assistance from PVCC in transferring to your current college? ☐ Yes ☐ No

22. If yes, please rate the quality of assistance you received from each of the following sources:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Applicable
Academic advising	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Academic program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Faculty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section III: Employment

1. Are you currently employed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. If not, are you seeking employment? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(If not currently employed, please skip to Section IV: Comments & Suggestions)*

3. Are you employed full-time or part-time? ☐ Full-time ☐ Part-time

4. On average, how many hours per week do you work?
☐ 1 to 10 hours ☐ 31 to 40 hours
☐ 11 to 20 hours ☐ 41 to 50 hours
☐ 21 to 30 hours ☐ Over 50 hours

5. What is your current occupation? _____

6. Which of the following occupational groups best describes the type of work you do?

☐ Administrative support ☐ Marketing/Sales ☐ Professional specialty workers
☐ Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing ☐ Operators/Fabricators/Laborers ☐ Service workers
☐ Executive/Administrator/Manager ☐ Precision/Production/Craft/Repair ☐ Technicians

7. To what extent is your PVCC degree program related to your current occupation?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

8. To what extent do skills acquired in your PVCC degree program help you perform in the workplace?
☐ Very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ Not at all

9. Compared to other employees beginning their careers in your job field, do you feel:
☐ Better prepared ☐ About as well prepared ☐ Less well prepared

10. In relation to your present job, how would you rate the level of academic preparation you received at PVCC?
☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

11. Who is your employer? _____

12. May we contact your employer to conduct an employer follow-up survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(If yes, please remember to complete, sign, and return the enclosed Contact Authorization Form)*

13. What is your exact job title? _____

14. Would you say that your job is:
☐ Very Satisfying ☐ Satisfying ☐ Not very satisfying ☐ Unsatisfying

15. Do you intend to pursue your current job as a long-term career? ☐ Yes ☐ No

16. When did you obtain your current job?
☐ Before attending PVCC ☐ While attending PVCC ☐ After attending PVCC

17. Did your degree from PVCC help you obtain your present job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

18. Has your degree helped you obtain a promotion in your present job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

19. Did you participate in PVCC's Co-op program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

20. Did you receive career placement assistance from PVCC in obtaining your present job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

21. If yes, please rate the quality of career placement assistance you received from each of the following sources:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Applicable
Academic program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Career services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Co-op program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Faculty	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

22. What is your annual salary? _____

23. What would you estimate your annual salary to be if you had not attended PVCC? _____

Section IV: Comments & Suggestions

In the space provided, please express comments or suggestions concerning any aspect of your PVCC experience. We are particularly interested in how we can improve our curriculum and services. Thank you for your participation.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix B: Graduate Comments

Provide more engineering classes.

I am personally very happy with my experience at PVCC. The faculty is absolutely professional and care for the students. One feels very confident at PVCC and the counseling center is the best! Thanks to many of the ladies at the counseling center and especially [counselor]!

I really enjoyed my time at PVCC, specially the closeness with faculty and staff. Some of the curriculum can be improved to better serve the students at the next level of education (4 year). Circuit Analysis class with teachers changing every year and the class pretty much teaching nothing made it pretty hard for me at my current college. Thanks!

I believe Piedmont was a great learning environment that helped me finish my general education requirement. I had a lot of great professors and counselors that I will never forget.

There are excellent teachers at PVCC. They try their best to help. Yet even some teachers need to concentrate to help those students whose native language is not English. Some students sometimes miss some super fast speech delivery but could understand and master it if heard or read. In addition, elderly students need a little more attention than young ones.

I wish there were more opportunities for Distance Learning for the adult returning to school. Also, I wish that every class that is listed as "required" should be offered every semester, and the class should be offered at least once during an evening slot. Some classes seem to be offered during a daytime slot, making it hard for the adult working population.

The education I received at Piedmont prepared me for a four year university. I was able to get a taste of what a college course was like before I attended James Madison. PVCC worked to my advantage.

Fresh air exchange in main building seems bad. It's stuffy, stagnant, and smelly.

As a working adult, I appreciate evening courses. Would like to see advanced level computer and other courses offered more than one semester a year. Would like to see many more computer application/software courses offered and also for a full semester's time. Four-six weeks of meeting for a class is essentially worthless. Would like a much greater number of courses offered during the summer. Current summer listings are pitifully few. More Saturday courses.

Possibly offer at least a bachelor's degree in some fields of study. Piedmont has good location, good tuition rate, good professors, but an associate is as far as you can go. That is such a shame.

I do hope to pursue a four-year degree in Architectural History at a later date.

I attended a four-year college 20 years ago and received a Bachelor of Science. Information was presented differently then. Important facts were pointed out. At PVCC I have read several textbooks cover to cover. I don't think that should be necessary in order to receive good grades.

([Professor]) rules!) The registration process was very complicated with the requirement of advisor's signature. Many times the advisor is difficult to get in touch with and for my PVCC career I only needed to meet with him once.

While I attended PVCC I took a variety of courses. I truly enjoyed them all. The quality of the education cannot be compared.

I was very pleased with the opportunity PVCC gave me. If you apply yourself anyone can get the same opportunity. Thank you!

I had one experience where I needed to take a class but there were not enough students to justify having a class; a letter to the dept. head fixed that.

I noticed a significant gap in expected student knowledge between two classes: C Programming and C++. There may be other classes with same situation.

The math department at PVCC is topnotch. I am way ahead of students here in math and physics; however, C++ is becoming a standard class for all engineering students. A C++ class should be part of the engineering program at PVCC. Also, a good electric circuits class would be very helpful.

Thank you. PVCC was a great experience.

Improve the environment!

1) A larger cafeteria and student lounge with tables, possible music in these areas.
2) Paint/remodel facility, too dark and dreary, not to mention the lack of sunlight.

These things really make a difference when you spend eight hours in a classroom for two years.

I suggest making the Surg. Tech. Program an Associate Degree program.

Not enough time for real world applications, troubleshooting, etc. Too much fluff (public speaking, tech writing, phys ed.) These do not help make an electronics technician.

PVCC had done well in preparing me for UVA. I would suggest more reading of books at PVCC because at UVA the reading load is quite heavy.

Piedmont was an excellent opportunity for me to have after high school. Keep up the good work.

I don't have any suggestions on how you can improve. In my experience at PVCC, I was very much pleased.

I believe certain teachers could be a little more understanding of medical conditions that force you to be absent two days that weren't in your control. Also a certain [secretary] should be taught to do her job and not try to do her [supervisor's] job.

Improve computer tech classes by using up-to-date equipment in labs, not outdated stuff—how can we compete in the workplace when we are not familiar with current technology? Instructor did a good job of updating us with theory – but no practical application!

All full-time faculty were excellent, especially [five professors]. I first sought a position with SNL Securities upon graduation, and was not at all prepared to contend with the "UVA graduate" culture. I left six months later. My current position, which I love, requires human resource knowledge; i.e., employment law, benefits administration, etc. I wish the PVCC Business Department would offer more in that area. Overall, I had a wonderful PVCC experience.

I transferred to UVA after my AND at PVCC directly after graduation. I was not prepared for the enormous amount of writing expected at UVA. Clinically I feel the Piedmont graduates do well; however, we are not prepared for the research class or the level of writing skills needed. A statistics course and a more focused writing curriculum in nursing would greatly help the students continuing their education after PVCC.

I had quite a few credits that did not count for anything. They transferred but did not count about 20 credits so that was frustrating but other than that it was a smooth process.

Books and materials too expensive! Very dissatisfied with some teachers. Not teaching with a lot of structure – don't feel I'm always getting my $ worth. Recently I took a class—teachers were switched in the middle of the semester due to administrative reason and caused complete disarray. We had to learn a whole new teaching/test taking style and a lot of grade [???]; extra credit, etc., was given – my grade is not a reflection of what I've learned.

Stay the course! Change nothing at all! PVCC is the lifeline of our community for thousands of people. UVA does little to educate the surrounding area, and the local high schools are weak at best.

The PVCC education is the best thing I have achieved in my life so far! So many people depend on you. Making it more difficult would be a huge mistake. I'll probably go on to Northwestern in the fall.

I had to miss three semesters because none of the courses I needed were offered. Make more class offerings available.

I am so glad that I chose to attend PVCC. It was a great bridge between high school and college. It was a place for me to get serious before heading off to college. I feel as though I was better prepared and ready to make education my number one priority. If I had to do things over again, I would do them the same and go to PVCC first.

PVCC was a tremendous resource considering my limited total tuition assistance that I had from the Montgomery G.I. Bill. I enjoyed attending PVCC and would love to see PVCC branch into some four year programs if at all possible as I would rather continue my education there than at UVA or somewhere else in the area.

A letter of verification of receipt and completion of the application for graduation should be put in place. First, my application for graduation was lost and I was not able to attend graduating ceremonies because of this. I checked twice on my application and was told everything was fine, when in fact it was not. Also, I think that curriculums are not keeping pace with technology. My Business Admin curriculum only called for one computer class. Computer applications pertaining to business should be in this curriculum as well as others.

The Charlottesville community readily accepts and is proud of Piedmont graduate nurses. I was accepted at each facility I applied to for employment and I believe it was partly attributed to Piedmont's excellent reputation.

I have attended PVCC for many years. Sometimes only for personal enrichment. My experiences both in pursuing a career and just for fun were excellent. Thank you.

I am very grateful to the faculty at PVCC for the extra individualized attention! My only purpose for leaving PVCC was to obtain my bachelor's degree. I would have preferred to continue my education here. I do feel that students need more instructions on uses of computers and the advisors would be more involved with the students in helping to plan their education. All of my advising appointments were hurried and not very informative or individualized. Overall, I am a very proud graduate of PVCC.

I was not impressed with the counselors. They were never available and didn't seem to really have your best interests at heart. Most of them spoke to you as if they had something better they could be doing and their job was just that – a job. As for as my instructors I could not have been more pleased. [Professor] had a large impact on me and I greatly enjoyed his class.

PVCC must have some classes on Saturdays which will be of great help to those who are fully exhausted at their jobs during the day and can't concentrate on lectures in the evening. PVCC should also consider part financing of books to deserving students; i.e., academically and/or economically; e.g., top two students may be given incentives for subsequent semesters. This is called real encouragement and appreciation from PVCC!

I passed on a promotion to attend school (not only PVCC) at night and study computer repair. I have enjoyed classes by [four instructors]. I am A+ and Network+ certified and am currently considering a MCSA certification. No decent job offers yet...

In my opinion PVCC can improve its academic program by simply advising the community or employers of the course. Employers should know that PVCC has a marketing curriculum and maybe they would offer an internship. But I feel a lot of personal thoughts concerning this whole process. My number is [phone number] if you would like to talk.

I felt I was at a disadvantage after transferring. Students at PVCC should be more strongly encouraged to research the schools they plan to transfer to and find out about the school's degree programs.

Received a Natural History certificate. As a retired physician this questionnaire is N/A to my experience at Piedmont. I have been completely satisfied with my natural history courses which have greatly benefited me as a volunteer with the Wintergreen Nature Foundation.

I now attend an out of state college that has more for me. There were several teachers that were great but many others that weren't. I only have a job to pay some bills. My degree has nothing to do with it. It got me accepted easier to my current school.

I loved attending Piedmont. I loved all aspects of it from classes to teachers to peers. Everyone always has bad experiences, but that happens throughout life – Piedmont was no exception. I graduated w/an Associates in Liberal Arts and actually plan to return in either summer or fall 2002 to take some electives.

Organize graduation process more efficiently. I received false information and when completed it took over 12 months to receive my diploma, very frustrating!

Public speaking is an important course to have taken at PVCC before entering UVA. Computer skills, PowerPoint, Word, and use of E-mail are absolutely required. It is necessary to be able to read and comprehend hundreds (200-400) pages per class in outside reading and manage the text assignments. Last semester, I produced about "350"

typed pages of homework and papers – all required to be typed. We did little of this at PVCC – just required of a few papers. Quite an adjustment!

Web based classes should be offered year-round. I was unable to take web based Int. Accounting this semester which postponed my career plans with SNL Securities 18 months.

I had graduated from a 4-year degree university prior to attending PVCC's nursing program. Therefore, my liberal studies were done at JMU. However, the nursing program at PVCC is excellent. The classes and clinicals prepared me for my current job at AMC.

- The counseling center's advisor [counselor] was of paramount importance to the success of my academic program. Accessibility was a huge issue as well as adaptive equipment needs.
- Student activities such as "Think Fast," a game show type of deal, were completely inaccessible to participants/students in wheelchairs. This was never address in the time I studied at PVCC.
- I already had a BA and came to PVCC for intensive technical training to facilitate a major career change.

To place more emphasis on laboratory classes/more number of hours.

At that time, I did not benefit from any co-op programs, which was unfortunate to me personally. Better career services, giving more help for graduates to find (get) jobs.

PVCC nursing program is excellent. The program does a wonderful job in preparing students for the difficult job of an RN.

I completed a certificate in Early Childhood Education. All the classes I needed were available to me and the teachers were excellent. I am interested in continuing my education and am considering PVCC. I am very interested in learning ASL and wish it counted as a foreign language!

I loved going to Piedmont. I think its ability to draw students from so many different aspects of life provides an invaluable diversity. My professors were wonderful, available, and always helpful. The environment is conducive to learning and pleasantly calm. While taking studio art classes, it would be very helpful to have the Dickinson building (at least first floor) open more. There is also a need to contact teachers which is difficult when they don't have offices or e-mail listed on website. It would be nice to

have office numbers, office hours, office phone numbers, and e-mail updated each semester.

The academic experience at a four-year college such as UVA is incomparable to the community college experience. My time at PVCC did little to prepare me for the rigorous course requirements and academic expectations at UVA. Some of the expectations that I was unprepared for include: critical thinking, interpretational discussion and reading, and analysis of situations. This is an expectation somewhat unique to the school within UVA that I am enrolled in (the McIntire School of Commerce).

The program was ideal for my circumstances.

Overall, the experience was outstanding. I hope to see the college expand in the future. It was a bit cramped at times.

I think the teachers hired need screening. So much is dependent on the professor; it makes a difference. At Piedmont I had some great teachers, but I also had some teachers who might have been good in their field of study; i.e., music, but they were terrible teachers.

Job information given is not really related to PVCC career but included for reference purposes.

The only thing particularly troublesome about my PVCC career was my academic advisor. I did not know this professor nor did I have classes with her. The only time I saw her was for approval of my schedule during registration period, which because she didn't really know me was a waste of time. A better system for assigning advisors that takes guidance and student needs into account might be something to consider.

It is very difficult to schedule appointment with advisors in certain curriculums especially when that advisor has "X" number of people to advise and sometimes has no idea what you should be taking anymore, if not less than you do.

I was very honest on this and I think you need to look at your nursing program as well as those who run it/instruct it.

I am very pleased with the experience PVCC afforded me. I feel the Nursing Program there is the best! I was ready to take State Boards and successfully pass them the first time I took it because of the great staff of instructors there at PVCC!

I feel the faculty and academics are just as good as UVA, maybe better since there is a better ratio of students to faculty. As a full time employee working 4 p.m. to midnight, it was hard to schedule the classes I needed.

As I was leaving PVCC, a student [student's name] was putting together a "students of the round" project in which those interested could gather at PVCC and talk about college expectations and problems both regarding in class and general college concerns and how to deal with these issues. I this is still going on!

The only problem I ran into while attending PVCC was the course availability. I work evenings and found it hard to sign up for a lot of classes. (The classes I wanted or needed.) Many of the interesting classes fell at night. I think a lot of people in this town work evenings and I would like to see more elective style classes during the morning hours.

I am sorry that I never received this letter before. I don't complete this form because I am taking some classes at PVCC currently. Therefore, I can't compare the college I am going to transfer with PVCC. I am sorry to let you rewrite and send this letter again. Hope my responses will satisfy your requests.

It was very challenging for me – I suggest those going in the Surg. Tech. Program to get all of their prerequisites out of the way first – it will be less stressful on them and they can concentrate on the program itself! Thank you.

I spent 3 years at PVCC. It was a great learning experience. I had good and bad times. I can't discuss any particular thing but there is always room for improvement from every aspect.

PVCC was a good thing. Definitely

The grading system at PVCC needs to be changed – i.e. a student who gets a final average of 87 or below 90 should get an A- instead of B. The grading system should be A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, etc, not just flat A, B, C...!

I feel very strongly about the fact that your clinicals in the nursing program should reflect in your semester grades. A lot of nursing is about bedside manner and not just book-smarts! A lot of time and effort is put into clinicals for only a pass or fail and it all comes down to test scores.

[Letter attached to survey] This letter is to provide comments and suggestions to a recent survey I received as a recent PVCC graduate. I apologize for its length, but though my comments are few, I thought I needed to add some explanations. I had been an adult student at PVCC for a number of years. As with most adult students I had a full-time job and the added responsibility of being a parent. First, let me say that PVCC is a great opportunity for people in this area. The opportunity to take one class or several classes in a pursuit of a professional career is a great thing, especially in an area that is heavily dominated by a university. Tuition is affordable, though the cost for books and materials is close to criminal. My area is dissatisfaction with PVCC in the area of Advising and Counseling. This department is geared towards assisting high school students make the transition to college. I would argue that adult students need that assistance as well. A good percentage of the student population is over the age of 25. Most with full-time jobs plus are parents, and quite possibly have some college education. At no point in my academic pursuits did anyone ask about my progress, my long-term professional goals, or what I wanted to do when I grew up? Obviously, my case may be at the extreme end of the spectrum, but my concern is that it may not be far from what others have experienced. I'm not suggesting hand holding for adults, but I am suggesting an office be created to address the specific needs of a significant portion of the student body. How did I come to the conclusion I want to major in Education. I looked at the requirements and looked at what I felt I could accomplish, but not with a counselor. I was on the back patio overlooking the rolling hills with a PVCC catalog in my hands. What about paying for college? I was in the financial aide office once. I suggest that the advising/counseling office take a long hard look at the services it provides. Has it changed to meet the needs of the changing student population? Is writing your SSN number on a public clipboard an adequate means of reporting for an appointment? Why not set up an Internet scheduler program? Why not conduct preliminary meetings via email? Email reminders? Why not assign students a counselor by curriculum? I very rarely ever saw the same person twice.

My next step is to apply to the BIS degree program at UVa. I have been working with a BIS degree and I'm taking a few courses this summer to fulfill my science credits. There I will be able to get a Bachelor's Degree with a concentration in Social Sciences. As for long-term goals, I hope to one day get a Master's degree in Industrial Organizational Psychology.

I have been blessed. I am fortunate to be where I am at this point in my life. Piedmont was good for me. Without having attended, I would not have been able to pursue my goals. Thanks for this opportunity. Sincerely, [student]

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